

An annotated bibliography of books that contain worthwhile information on Lace Bobbins

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Introduction

It is a long time since I looked at some of my many reference books on Lace Bobbins and whilst I am not the only one publishing articles about lace bobbins on the internet, lace journals and club newsletters (etc) there has not been any books of significance to lace bobbins since the Springetts ground-breaking book *Success to the Lace Pillow* (see later). I will repeat here that it is a book that every collector (or even interested user) of lace bobbins should have on their shelf.

Publications

Bellerby, Denys. Lace Making Bobbins. Lace. A Series of 9 Articles. Published around 1978. (The exact reference is unknown to me as I only have photocopies.)

I must apologise for including this Bellerby publication as a "book" however it is a concise and full treatment of a wide range of lace bobbins. I like his descriptions as they are basic and not embellished and serve as an excellent reference series before the Springetts book. In my early days of bobbin studies, I used his work a lot.

I must also comment as I have had the occasion of chastising Auctioneers for their ignorance and indeed being guilty of giving lace tools misleading names that have become the standard names for such items as "Lace Making Lamps" which are more often than not as they have described them...i.e. lace-making lamps, rather than pretty oil lamps. As I understand it (and stand to be corrected) he was an auctioneer!

Bullock, Alice-May. Lace and Lace Making. B. T. Baysford Ltd. London. 1981.

This author has two chapters on lace bobbins which illustrates the hard work she must have done to precis a lot of interesting things about lace bobbins. She does this by using illustrations well and capturing the social spirit of many of the inscribed bobbins. It is not a bobbin reference book as such but fits well within the terms of her title.

Freeman, Charles. Pillow Lace in the East Midlands. Borough of Luton Museum and Art Gallery. 1958 Reprinted 1980.

This has been and remains one of my favourite books that deal well and quite extensively with lace bobbins. It was the first book I found that began to answer the many questions I had been researching to find answers to. It also introduced me to a basic understanding of lace (which remains sadly lacking!)

It reviews the cottage lace industry of the East Midlands in its historical setting. I like the fact that he also covers in reasonable detail other lace making equipment. His work on lace bobbins is quite extensive and it is reasonable to suspect he relies heavily on Wright in some areas. His illustrations are clear and understandable, now out of print but worthy of consideration for an interested collector.

Hopewell, Jeffrey. Pillow Lace and Bobbins. Shire Publications. Princes Risborough. 1975. Reprinted 1994.

The joy of this book is that Shire Publications decided to do it entirely in colour. This shows up the beauty of the East Midland (especially) style of bobbins and was the first book to at least dally with Continental style bobbins. Though small this book has the value of a much larger coffee table book with its wide-ranging and interesting collection of bobbins illustrated in colour.

Huetson, T. L. Lace and Lace Bobbins. A history and Collectors Guide. David and Charles. Newton Abbot. 1973.

Fully half of this book is about lace bobbins and even the topic of lace has its collectable interests mentioned. I envy him for his knowledge and writing skills as I have often thought that this is the type of book I would have liked to have written! His description of bobbins, though illustrated, are especially interesting in its textual context. I note that I have highlighted more paragraphs of special interest in his book than any other similar bobbin books I own. I find this very telling of my appreciation of his work. I know more than a few collectors who find his book most valuable to their collecting interests and concur with them.

Springett, Christine and David. Success to the Lace Pillow. Privately Published. C & D Springett. Rugby. 1997.

David and Christine's work on lace bobbins took them a long time and represent a lot of work. I should point out that before publishing their definitive work in 1997 they have a Shire Publication of the same title.

The Shire booklet is a much shorter version (and thus incomplete) of their 1997 book of the same title. The Shire book has only a few coloured illustrations but the text still represents their research well.

Their book has become a classic for bobbin collectors and they have set the standard for research and originality in the sphere of lace bobbin history and collecting.

In some ways, their book comes to life because they discovered the genealogy of several bobbin makers that are now well known to us. Their work and skills are well covered in each appropriate section and added to that are their discovery of several makers they identified by numbers.

They also discuss the wider field of collecting and also a system of identifying the makers they cover in this book. It is a pity that they were not able to have it published in colour but I presume this would have made its price less affordable to us who study and or collect lace bobbins.

It is a book that every collector or person even slightly interested in bobbins should have on their shelf.

Springett, David. Turning Lace Bobbins. Privately Published. C & D Springett. Rugby. 1995

Whilst this is not a collectors book it is full of turning techniques for making bobbins and supplemented with excellent illustration and hints and tips. I suspect that every "wannabe" bobbin turner should have this book

Whiting Gertrude. Old-Time Tools and Toys of Needlework. Dover Publications inc. New York. reprint 1971. Originally published by Columbia University Press. New York 1928 under the title Tools and Toys of Stitchery.

By its title, it is clear that the book has a much wider field than just lace bobbins. I loved all of her chapters on the various toys and tools she writes about, but her chapter on lace bobbins and other tools is delightful. Her words are so thoughtful and descriptive. The bobbins come alive as she tells us little of their history and social context. There are a satisfactory number of photographs of bobbins (mostly from her collection I should guess) She teaches as she writes and you enjoy her writing as you learn.

Wright, Thomas The Romance of the Lace Pillow. H.H.Armsrtong. Olney 1919. Reprinted Ruth Bean Carlton 1982.

Wright comes to us at just about the time that the lace industry was seeing its final days, but he brings to us the history of lace as perceived during the 1800s. He oversees his bobbin collecting at a time of transition before we had such mobility in society. It is lovely to realise that as he cycled around the east midland villages and bought bobbins for his collection he not only knew and recorded the Villages from which he bought them but gave them their traditional names. His treatment of bobbins is extensive and he gives us a nomenclature for the inscriptions on bobbins that we mostly keep to today.

I find his book and his view on lace bobbins as essential for my chosen field of study in my retirement.